

The Price of Paradise

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THE PRICE OF PARADISE

How is everyone? Alhamdulillah, if you are a Muslim everything should be Alhamdulillah. Before we get started on the topic at hand, a quick little sidebar and I try to make sidebars on points of emphasis when possible. Normally when you hear a speaker or a Khateeb speak, a lot of the time they will begin with what I just began with, which is known as what? Does anybody know the name of this? Khutbatul-Haajah, which is known as the sermon of need. There is a reason why it is called Khutbatul-Haajah. This is one of the Sunan Mu'akkadah (the emphasised Sunan that the Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam used to do repetitively). Whenever our Rasool sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam had a need, he had something he wanted from his community or he had something serious to tell them, he would begin with Khutbatul-Haajah. If I wished, I could make this entire lecture about that because there is so much beauty and benefit in it.

The reason I am telling you that is because a lot of times you hear Khutbatul-Haajah at the beginning of a lecture, you start to turn off and wait for him to say what he is going to say. That is something you should try to avoid, and you should try to absorb the words of Khutbatul-Haajah because there is so much benefit in it. The scholars of our Salaf used to introduce this topic heavily. When Ibn Taymiyyah Rahimahullahi Ta'aala was imprisoned and he saw that the prisoners were fiddling about with needless things that would waste their time, one of the first things he would teach them is Khutbatul-Haajah.

There is at least one very well known story of one person who became Muslim just by hearing the words of Khutbatul-Haajah. Anybody know his name? You should know these things because these are part of our Deen and part of our history. I will tell you his story but if you can tell me his name by the end of the lecture, I will give you one of the DVDs that I have with me for free. There was once a man who came to Makkah and he was a Raaqi (a healer) – he was someone who did Ruqyah and he was known and famous for it. He heard about this man named Muhammad Ibn Abdullah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam who was being called a madman, people were saying he was possessed, he had some black magic on him, and so on and so forth. This man said that I am a Raaqi, therefore I am going to go to him and I am going to heal him.

He went to the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and introduced himself – my name is so and so, I am a well known Raaqi and by the permission of Allah I can heal you. You see even though they were Mushrikeen, they still believed in the power that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala possesses, so he said to him if Allah wills I can heal you. After his long introduction and speech, the Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam said are you done? He said yes I am done, so the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam immediately responded to him with Khutbatul-Haajah. Immediately after he finished speaking, the man looked at him and said the Shahaadah. He said I have heard the speech of poets, kings, emissaries and the greatest of the

greats of the world; there is no speech that is like this speech and this is not the speech of human beings. He accepted Islam and then he called his entire tribe to Islam.

Now on to the topic at hand. How many people in here desire Jannah? Raise your hands. Getting into Jannah is a difficult task and we know this from the Hadith of Jibreel 'alayhis-salaam. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam told us that when Allah created Jannah (Heaven) and Naar (Hell), he sent Jibreel to look at them. When Jibreel 'alayhis-salaam saw Heaven, he told Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala Yaa Allah there is not going to be anybody who hears about this place not going there. He saw Naar and he said Yaa Allah there is not going to be anybody who hears about this place, but they are going to avoid it. Then Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala surrounded Jannah with hardships, difficulties, trials, Fitnah and all of the things to go through to get there, and He surrounded the fire with desires, temptations and everything a human being wants and lusts after. He sent Jibreel back and when Jibreel returned, he said Yaa Allah there is not going to be anybody who is going to make it to Jannah and I am afraid that everyone is going to Hell. This is the reality, so getting into Jannah is difficult and there is no shortcut. You are not going to tunnel under the difficulties and you are not going to catapult over it. You have to go through it.

There is also something known as **ثمن الجنة** – the price that you will pay for Paradise. There is a price on entering into al-Jannah and this is something that scholars before us have spoken on, I am not someone who is bringing about something new. There is a formula that Allah jalla wa a'laa has laid out in His Qur'an for getting into Jannah. It is a simple formula actually. Its implications are not simple but the formula is simple.

Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says about His Book:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ... ﴿النَّحْل: ٨٩﴾

And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur'an) as an exposition of everything. (Surat an-Nahl: 89)

It explains all things and if we believe that then anything we need, desire, suffer or face, the Qur'an should have some answer for it because Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala said He left nothing out of this Book. Do we believe in that? There is an answer, but the problem is our distance from the Qur'an. As with older generations from before us, this generation has successively gotten more distant from the Book of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. We brag about how many Huffaadh we have running around, but the point of the matter is not just to memorise. The point is most of our Huffaadh have memorised a book they do not understand. Yes they have preserved it for the next generation in its oral format, which can then be transmitted over into a book format. Yes that is a beautiful thing, but what benefit would it do if they do not understand it?

It is like me having an illness and this illness is going to kill me sooner or later, so you give me a book that explains to me exactly how to get rid of this illness, but it is written in a language that no human being speaks. What benefit am I going to get from this book? I can tell you look I have a book that can cure everything but I do not have access to it, I do not understand it and there is no one else I know that understands it. This is a problem because when Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala revealed the Qur'an, He revealed it for an intent and a purpose.

Allah tells us in Surat al-Furqaan:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ﴿الفرقان: ١﴾

Blessed be He Who sent down the criterion (of right and wrong, i.e. this Qur'an) to His slave (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) that he may be a warner to the 'Aalameen (mankind and Jinns). (Surat al-Furqaan: 1)

Allah says glory be to Him who revealed this Furqaan upon His slave. For what reason?

لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا

That he may be a warner to the 'Aalameen (mankind and Jinns).

This is the point. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala did not say that He revealed it so that it can become to mankind a Qiraa'ah (a recitation). He revealed it so that it can become to mankind a warning. How can we be warned by something we do not understand? If this building was burning down from the other side and I ran in here telling you this building is burning and if you do not get out of here you are going to die, speaking in a language that none of you spoke, would any of you benefit from that warning? No, you would think I am just speaking gibberish, this guy has lost his mind, you would probably escort me out and then if you did not listen to the warning you might all die. The Qur'an is warning us, guiding us and leading us, but we do not understand what is being said so therefore we are just listening to it.

We are going to Insha Allahu Ta'aala take just a few verses from the Book of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. You also have to understand that when the Qur'an is recited to you, this is not just a mere book – this is Kalaamullah (this is the speech of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala). These are the words of the Creator of all things being recited to you. This is your Rabb speaking to you, therefore it should be of the utmost importance to pay attention to it and to know what is being said. You should know more what Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says to you than what your parents are saying to you, and that is realistic without putting the issue of parents down any bit. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala should be understood first and foremost, then maybe you would not have so much headache with your parents all the time.

The brother recited from Surat as-Saff today, one of my favourites. It is hard to say you have a favourite Surah, but this is one of the ones that I really love. I really love Surat as-Saff because of the complexity of it and the entirety of it from beginning to end has so much benefit and it is so great in value. Surat as-Saff begins by Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala praising Himself, as He has the right to do so. Then Allah asks a question twice and whenever you see something repeated in the Qur'an back to back (two times), especially when it is coming in the form of a question, pay attention to the response to the question.

Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَمْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٢﴾ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿٣﴾ الْصَّف

O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do? Most hateful it is with Allah that you say that which you do not do. (Surat as-Saff: 2-3)

The word used is hate – most hateful it is in the sight of your Lord that you say something you do not do. It is very important. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is saying if you are saying something, then do it. Then Allah 'azza wa jall speaks about the love He has for those who strive hard in His cause in ranks upon ranks, as if they were one solid structure. This is what the Surah is named after (Surat as-Saff). Then Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala speaks about Musa 'alayhis-salaam and when Musa came to his people telling them that I am the Prophet sent to you, and they mocked at him and laughed at him. Then 'Eesa 'alayhis-salaam who came to his people and said I am the Messenger of Allah to you, to confirm that which came before me and to give you glad tidings of the next one to come after me whose name should be Ahmad. They said to him:

هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿الْصَّف: ٦﴾

"This is plain magic." (Surat as-Saff: 6)

Then Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says how horrible and awful it is for someone to invent a lie about Allah while they themselves are being called to Islam, and Allah does not guide those type of people. Then Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala speaks about those who wish to put out the light of Allah with their mouths. They wish to stamp out the light of Allah but Allah refuses but to perfect His light, no matter how much those who disbelieve hate it.

Then Allah says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَهِّرُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كُلُّهُمْ لَوْ كَرِهُ

الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿الصف: ٩﴾

He it is Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islamic Monotheism) to make it victorious over all (other) religions even though the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, and disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah and in His Messenger Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) hate (it). (Surat as-Saff: 9)

Then comes a question in the next verse and that is a question which is your make it or break it to al-Jannah. It is a very important question and the fact that Allah is asking this rhetorical question is due to emphasis. When someone asks a rhetorical question, it is for the reader or the listener to open their mind to the question and in turn a rhetorical question is what? Does anybody know what a rhetorical question really is? It is a statement. A rhetorical question is a statement put into a question format, in order to catch the attention of the listener. So if Allah jalla wa a'laa is using this type of format, then it should be very clear to you that it is something important.

Allah asked a question:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هَلْ أَدْلُكُمْ عَلَى تِجَارَةٍ تُنْجِيْكُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ﴿الصف: ١٠﴾

﴿١٠﴾

O You who believe! Shall I guide you to a commerce that will save you from a painful torment. (Surat as-Saff: 10)

O you who believe – so we already know that Allah is speaking to those people who believe.

Allah says can I guide you to a Tijaarah (تجارة). What is Tijaarah? Business. Allah is saying can I guide you to a business that will prevent you from being painfully punished. Can I guide you to a Tijaarah with Me? You see Allah deals with it as business. This is business that you can get into with Me that will prevent you from being painfully punished. Is this question rhetorical or not? Of course it is rhetorical because which person in their right mind would respond and say, "You know what Yaa Allah, no I take the punishment. I do not need what You have and I will just be punished, why not?" No one is that insane.

What comes next is a formula for success in this life and in the next, and it is the answer to most of the Du'aas that we have been making for probably most of our lives. When I realised

this, every time I would hear these Du'aas I would always think to myself that we are asking Allah for something that He has already given us and it is quite odd. When we say O Allah give help, honour and dignity to Islam and the Muslims, now I always think this is something Allah has already given us. We are asking something that has already been given, but the problem is we are not willing to do the business to get it. It is like begging for a paycheque and you are not willing to work. It does not work like that. It is like going and asking your boss at work to get paid for next year which you have not worked yet. It is not going to happen like that. You put in the work and you get the reward. This is why it is referred to as Tijaarah in this verse, because there is some work involved and it is a reward for work. You put in work, you get reward.

There is a simple formula that comes in the next verse and it has three parts. The first two components of this formula are like let us say if you go to a pharmacy and you get some medicine, whether it be for a cold, a headache or whatnot. You should do this if you have never done it before – turn the medicine over and look at the back. There are two sets of ingredients and does anybody know the name of these two sets of ingredients? Active and inactive. There will be inactive ingredients which will make up the majority of the medicine. It says inactive because these are just compounds that allow the medicine to be absorbed by the body, because the only other way you can take it is straight into the bloodstream. So in order for you to take this pill orally, there needs to be some inactive compounds and other things that allow it to be absorbed.

Then usually there is only one or just a couple of active ingredients, and this is actually what you need. This is the part of the formula that makes it work and this is what you need to have, because if you were to take just the inactive ingredients you are taking what they call a placebo in the medical field. It would not do you any good, even though your mind might think so and you might feel the benefit from the mental capacity of the mind to do certain things, but you would not be taking the active ingredient. This formula that Allah jalla wa a'ala is going to give us also has active and inactive ingredients. It has two inactive ingredients that without the third one being put into them, they do not really do much. They do not really do much for you without the third one being in there.

Does anybody know what the first phrase or the first ingredient is in the next verse that comes after this question?

Allah says:

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۝ ذُلِكُمْ
خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿الصف: ۱۱﴾

That you believe in Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know! (Surat as-Saff: 11)

The first ingredient is:

تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

That you believe in Allah.

I want you to see how merciful Allah is to His slaves because the first two ingredients which are inactive alone, Allah has already given you as default if you are from those who believe. You have already been given them as a default. How many people in this room believe in Allah? Raise your hands. You would not be Muslim if you did not, so you have that ingredient. What is the next one?

وَرَسُولِهِ

And His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam).

How many of you believe in the Messenger of Allah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam? So the first two we have as default. It is a three part formula and you already have two parts. Subhan Allah, you see how desirous Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is for you to go to Jannah? But again, these two by themselves are inactive because they are not tangible. You cannot see them and you do not know if anyone believes or does not believe, unless there are other things that come along with it to prove that fact. Hasan al-Basri Rahimahullahi Ta'aala said that Imaan is not the subsistence of your hopes and your desire that you want to be a believer and you want to be a good Muslim, he said Imaan is that which settles itself into your heart and then becomes manifested in your actions. So Imaan alone – if you do not do anything with it, then it does not benefit you. Trust me, it will not benefit you whatsoever.

There is the third part of the formula which is the active ingredient and that is the Tijaarah itself. It is the business that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is saying if you add to these two, it will not only make them become active and benefit you in your life, but you will complete the formula that will help you to avoid a painful punishment.

وَتَجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ ۝ ذُلِّكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ

تَعْلَمُونَ

And that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives, that will be better for you, if you but know!

That you struggle, strive (جهد) and make effort. For what? For a paycheque? Is that what the verse says? Is there any paycheques mentioned? What about a big house – are big houses mentioned? What about that nice fancy car you drive – is that what you are working for? Is that what Allah is telling you to do Tijaarah for? What does it say?

تُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

You work for Me. Your effort, striving and struggling becomes work. Allah says you punch the clock for Me. You see this is the missing ingredient to this Ummah and it is one of the reasons we suffer from so much. We claim a lot of things and we say a lot of things, but we do very little. The most active we can become is in protests. Seriously, that is the most I see us buzzed up and ready to do something. We are ready to protest and when it is time to tear some stuff up, we are there. But when Allah jalla wa a'laa is telling us to put in work sincerely for Him with reward that might or might not come in this life, but for sure it is going to come in the next life, then we are quite slow. You see that is when our own selves start playing with us and Shaytaan plays with us.

Allah is saying work for Me, strive for Me, make effort for Me and sacrifice for Me. This is what is missing from this Ummah. The companions radhiallahu 'anhum wa ardhahum were not like this. There is reason why Allah says about them:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرَجْتُ لِلنَّاسِ... آلُ عُمَرَانَ: ١١٠

You [true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam and his Sunnah (legal ways, etc)] are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind. (Surat Aali 'Imraan: 110)

They were the best nation because their Deen was simple. Allah says about them that when the Rasool sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam commanded them, their response would be what?

سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا

We hear and we obey. That was their Deen and their Deen was extremely simple – they heard and they obeyed. Allah said ar-Rasool commanded and they acted. Allah told them stop, they stopped. Ar-Rasool told them sit down, they sat down. When he told them to go forward, they went forward. He told them to stop, they would stop. Their Deen was so simple and they did not need to question and get Fiqh councils together and all of this nonsense. They were

the best generation to ever come forward from mankind and their place is cemented in history. Also what Allah gave them because of it is well known to anybody who has taken a look at history. Allah jalla wa a'laa gave them the world at their feet.

Now at the worst end of the scale when it comes to this whole action thing is not us, Alhamdulillah. It is people whom Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala said when He told them to do something, they would respond:

سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا

We hear and we disobey. Who was this? Bani Isra'eel. They would listen to Allah saying to do something and they would straight out refuse, they would question and try to get out of it, duck and dodge and just not do it. They would know Allah said do it and they would blatantly just not do it. Alhamdulillah most of this Ummah is not like that. And when I am speaking of the Ummah, I am speaking about the majority of Muslims who are upon the right path. We do not blatantly disobey Allah like that, but we are also not on the proper side of the scale. We do not do what Allah tells us to do without questioning, and we try to find ways around it. We kind of fall somewhere in the middle and I like to say about this Ummah that we are:

سَمِعْنَا وَخَلَاص

We heard and that is it. We listen and we do nothing. When Allah jalla wa a'laa says something to us, we will say Mashaa Allah that is where it ends. Allah will command us to something in the Qur'an, we will listen to it and say, "Mashaa Allah, so beautiful." Sometimes I have heard people saying, "That is so beautiful" about verses which if they understood what was being said, they would cry or they would lose sleep. The Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam said that there were certain chapters revealed in the Qur'an like Surat al-Hud, Surat al-Waaqi'ah, Surat al-Mursalaat, Surat an-Nabaa' and Surat at-Takweer that made him turn grey before his time. These were severe warnings of punishment that cannot be understood properly in this life.

So we are guilty of doing nothing. Everybody complains that the Muslims are so guilty of doing these things, extreme this and extreme that. Hold on a second, the biggest thing that Muslims in this day and age are guilty of is doing nothing, except all the wrong things and chasing the wrong things. This is something that this Ummah needs to fix and I am not saying that I have the answers. If I had the answers I would not be here, I would be out there doing it. But I do know that something that is done for the sake of Allah 'azza wa jalla alone and sincerely, based on knowledge from His Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam is always going to be beneficial. That is even if it is something small – small steps that we begin to make. Even if it is just taking an intense effort to go back and look at the Qur'an, from a sense of we want to know what Allah says. Not just how to recite it properly,

even though it is extremely important to know how to recite the Qur'an properly with Tajweed and it is of the utmost importance. However, that cannot trump understanding what it means and these two things should go hand in hand.

This effort that Allah is asking from us, He is very specific about it as well. He says I want two types of effort from you in this Tijaarah. Number one is:

بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ

With your money (wealth). This is very clear – Maal (مال) is money. With your wealth and that which you possess – I want it back. Allah jalla wa a'laa says that which I gave to you as an Amaanah, just give it back. The formula is very beautiful as well. Give it back, I will multiply it for you, give it back to you in multitude and then save that in the Aakhirah as good deeds. There is no loss in that Tijaarah and that is the only Tijaarah that you can get into with your money in this life, where it is guaranteed that there will be no loss. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says your money, your wealth and that which I have entrusted to you, you put it to work for Me. Even if it is by building Islamic schools, building Masaajid or helping the poor. Whatever it is, it is for My sake you use that.

There are very few things in life that can be guaranteed and one of them is that on the Day of Judgment you will regret every single pound that has ever been in your possession, except for the ones that you spent for the sake of Allah. Every other one you will wish you could have back, so that you can go back and spend it for the sake of Allah jalla wa a'laa. When the Angel of Death comes, Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala said there will be some of those who will say:

رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۖ ۹۹

My Lord! Send me back. (Surat al-Mu'minoon: 99)

Why does he want to go back? So he can pray, so he can fast and so he can do some good with that which he left behind. He will want to go take that which he left behind and do some good with it for the sake of Allah. Every pound that has ever crossed your hand or your bank account, you will regret it on The Day of Judgment unless it was spent for the sake of Allah alone and that also means spent on your family, spent paying for necessities and things of that nature. The ones that you just wasted, you will wish you could have them back.

Then Allah says:

وَأَنفُسِكُمْ

And I want your greatest commodity – I want you. I want your time, I want your effort, I want your energies, your talents, your resources and things that you know you can benefit the Ummah with. If you spent six years in college and six years in university and you are not using that great education that you got to benefit the Muslims or the Ummah, then you wasted six years of your life and you will wish you could have it back. If you use that little bit of talent to get a job then no problem. Work because that is the way we survive, but that same talent should also be used to give back to this Ummah in some way, shape or form. Then those six years you spent in university will be six years of Ibaadah to Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, because you used them for the right reasons. There is no action that a Muslim can do that cannot be turned into an Ibaadah if they know how to do it.

What is the first Hadith in Bukhari?

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Every action is judged by its intention.

Therefore, if you intend something with your actions, you get that reward. If you go to work every day to get a paycheque and the intent of that work is just for that cheque and that is all you care about, then your reward for that forty hours of work you did during the week is that cheque and that is it. That is all you are going to get. You are getting paid for what you did, but if you also understand that I am out working because Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala has commanded me to do so, this was the Sunnah of the Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam (to put in work for the family), and I am doing this to take care of my family the way Allah 'azza wa jall has given me the opportunity and ability to do so, then it can also be considered to be Ibaadah (you are worshipping Allah). The Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam said work is worship, so if you know what you are doing, you do it right. It does not matter if you clean rubbish for a living, if you are doing it to please Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala so you can take care of your family, then it will be Ibaadah because at the end of the day we know you are a means to an end.

I remember a brother talking about one time before he was on Deen. He got into an argument with his wife and he basically told her, "Look, you do not have a say around here. I am the one who pays the bills, I put food on the table and I keep the lights on." He said his wife actually woke him up and he started coming back to Deen a little bit after that. She looked at him and said, "Really? So you think that if you die tomorrow, Allah is not going to take care of this family? You think that Allah did not write the Rizq of me and your children fifty thousand years ago, and that we need you? Nobody needs you, you are the one who needs us and you need Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. You are just a means with which Allah takes care of this family, and you should be honoured to do that." That is the way it should be looked at. You have an opportunity to be the medium with which Allah takes care of your family and you should do that with honour. It is not a burden.

Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala wants that work – He wants you to put in work. This is the formula – believe in Allah properly, believe in His Messenger sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam properly and be ready to put in work and effort for the Deen. There are many ways you can do that and we would not be able to cover that in this lecture tonight, but this is something that should be discussed amongst communities. Especially when it comes to these youth that are sitting in the room today with so much energy, too much time on their hands and too much talent. What can be used and put into the service of the Deen?

For these three simple things and this simple little formula, I want to show you what Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala has prepared, because we are not at Jannah yet are we? We have only been avoiding a painful punishment, so the only thing Allah has promised us is that a painful punishment is avoided. Now if that were all that Allah was willing to give you, would it be enough? Would it be enough for you if Allah said for all of this work you are doing, I am only going to not punish you? Would that be sufficient for you? That is sufficient for me. You mean for all those sins I committed, all those times I disobeyed You, all those times I did what You told me not to do and did not do what You told me to, You are not going to punish me for them? Alhamdulillah that is a good deal, but Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is much more than that. He is much more than we can comprehend and even begin to understand. This is only scratching the surface of what Allah wants to give you – that He says He is not going to punish you.

In reality, Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala could say He is not going to punish you and you just stop existing. He could deal with us like He is going to deal with the animals – do justice between us and that is it. Nobody could complain because Allah owes you zero. Allah owes no human being anything. Hypothetically, if you were to take all of the good deeds of all the human beings that have ever lived from the time of Aadam 'alayhis-salaam to the time of the last human being, transfer all of those good deeds to the account of one person on the Day of Judgment, and then tell that person to take these good deeds to Allah and repay Him – do you think you would have enough? Would you have enough deeds to repay Him for your eyesight, to repay Allah for the air that you breathe, to repay Allah for the water you drink, to repay Allah for the heart He gave you or to repay Him for your brain? You would not have enough.

We are already in debt – a debt that we can never repay and every day that debt gets deeper and deeper. This is why we are also understood as slaves. We are all slaves because we are indebted with a debt that we can never repay, and our Master whom we owe the debt to is the One whom we have to get everything from. We need it from Him and we can never escape from this, and that is why we are totally always going to be slaves of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. We do not own ourselves. We belong to Allah and we are owned, so we are slaves.

Allah owes you nothing but He is willing to give you everything. This is why we are supposed to understand and love Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala so much, because He owes us nothing

– ثمن الجنّة but He is willing to give us everything. In the next verse, the first phrase becomes

this is the price of Paradise. This is what we strive after and struggle so hard for, and this is the only way any human being will ever enter into Jannah. I do not care how many deeds you have, it can never be enough. You cannot earn your way to Jannah. The Prophet ‘alayhi-s-salaatu was-salaam told his companions (narrated by Abu Hurayrah in the collection of Imaam Muslim) – let none of you think that by doing good you are going to go to Jannah. They said not even you O Rasool? He said not even me, unless Allah forgives me. So what is the first phrase in the next verse?

يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً
فِي جَنَّاتِ عَدْنٍ ۝ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿الصف: ۱۲﴾

(If you do so) He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwelling in Gardens of ‘Adn – Eternity [Paradise], that is indeed the great success. (Surat as-Saff: 12)

يَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ

(If you do so) He will forgive you your sins.

I will forgive you of your sins – that is the ticket into Jannah right there. You can have all the good deeds you want, but if Allah does not forgive you your mistakes then you will not enter into Jannah. It just will not happen. Forgiveness of Allah is ثمن الجنّة (the price of Paradise), and that is what we struggle and strive for. Every son of Aadam sins and the best of those who sin are those who repent. So since you are not going to be perfect and you are going to sin, one sin that Allah does not forgive you for is enough to throw you into Jahannam forever because you were commanded not to do it. So if Allah does not forgive you one sin, He could put you in Jahannam forever or for however long He wishes and you could never complain because you did it.

If you want to step into those gates of al-Jannah, it is going to be through the forgiveness of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. This is why the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam used to emphasise Tawbah so much. This is why he himself used to lead by example by making Istighfaar over one hundred times a day for things he did not even commit – just to be the example that it is through the forgiveness of Allah. This is why he used to encourage his companions to be quick to run to Allah for Tawbah. This is why Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala told the angel that writes your bad deeds to delay for a quarter of a day before writing that bad deed, to see if My slave comes back to me and He does not write it. This is why – because

it is through the forgiveness of Allah that you will enter into Jannah, no matter how bad you might have been.

We all should know the story of the man who killed ninety nine people, well he actually killed a hundred. Allah forgave him just because he was heading in the right direction, and Allah actually changed the circumference of the entire globe or He moved the physics of the earth and shrunk the earth, so that this man can be forgiven. This was a man who killed a hundred people. We know the story of the woman who was a prostitute – she went down to a well to get water in her shoe just to give it to a dog and Allah forgave her. We know about a woman who was known as a decent woman, but just for her torturing a cat she went to Hell. So it is not about what you have done, it is about the way that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is going to deal with it on the Day of Judgment. You could be doing a lot of sin and still go to Jannah, and there could be someone who did a lot of good and still goes to Jahannam. It is all about the heart. Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala says that the ones who He saved are the ones who bring to Allah a heart that is repentant to Allah. So this forgiveness is the entry into Paradise.

Allah says:

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ

(If you do so) He will forgive you your sins, and admit you into Gardens.

I will forgive you of your sins and then enter you into Jannah. This is what we strive for – we strive for Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala to forgive us. On the Day of Judgment, there will be a man whom Allah has deemed him to the fire and he is being dragged to be thrown into Hell. This is part of the 'Ilm al-Ghayb that the Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam told us about. As he approaches the edge to be thrown into Hell, Hell recedes (pulls back) and Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala asks Hell, what is the matter with you? Hell will say, my Lord he is seeking refuge with You from me. Even though You have told him to go to Hell, He is still seeking refuge with You from me, so I have no choice but to leave him. Because of this Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala tells the angels dragging him, release my slave, and he enters into Jannah.

There is another man who is being punished and he is also being dragged to Hell. He says to Allah, my Rabb I did not expect this from You. This is not what I expected on this day, I did not expect this. Allah jalla wa a'laa will say, My slave, what did you expect? You did all the bad deeds, you are the one who made all the mistakes, what did you expect? He says I expected You were so merciful that You could even have mercy on someone like me. Then Allah will say to Himself, he has called Me upon my mercy, I am showing him mercy. He tells them let him go and he enters into Jannah. You know about the man who told his children that when I die, burn me and then spread my ashes throughout the sea and the water. On the Day of Judgment, Allah puts him back together and asks him why did you do what you did? The man

says, You know why I did what I did. I knew that if You ever caught me, You would throw me into the fire. Just for that fear of Allah that this man had, which caused him to do this action which in itself is forbidden, Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala forgave him.

You see we do not know how the system of Allah works when it comes to forgiveness, so we just work for it, we strive for it and we do the most that we can for it. That is what we are striving for – we do good deeds so that Allah will forgive us for the ones that we slip up on. We do good deeds so that Allah can forgive us for the mistakes – this is what we are trying to accomplish. Yes there is going to be a weight on the scales on the Day of Judgment, but we do not know how much anything weighs. We do not know the value or weight of anything. On the Day of Judgment, it will have different weights. We do know that your حسن الخلق (good manners) will be the heaviest. The Prophet 'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam said the heaviest thing that will go on your scale is حسن الخلق (your good manners). We also know that there are things that can come to your aid on the Day of Judgment and save you.

There is a person who will be brought in front of Allah on the Day of Judgment and he will have ninety nine huge scrolls of bad deeds. The scales are being weighed, they go to put his bad deeds on the scale and a card falls out – one small little paper and what does this paper have written on it? Laa Ilaaha Illallah. Allah says take that card and place it on the other side. Logically there is no way it could outweigh those ninety nine massive scrolls of bad deeds, but Rasoolullah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said when the paper is placed on the scale, it tips the scale in his favour and he enters into Jannah. At the end of time there will be people who will not pray, they will not make Hajj, they will not fast and they will not do any action of Islam. The only thing they will know about Islam is Laa Ilaaha Illallah – that is it and they will only say that because they know their forefathers said that. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam was asked, what benefit will that be to those people? They do not pray, they do not fast, they do not pay Zakah, they do not make Hajj and they do not do any action of Islam. Rasoolullah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said it will take them to Jannah, so we never know. We do what we can, striving, struggling and hoping that Allah will forgive us for the mistakes that we make.

As a side note, when it comes to mistakes we become way too hard on ourselves, and unfortunately we are way too hard on each other. This has become a big problem – judging one another based on a few things that we see. When Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala decided to create man, He had a discussion with the angels about it and He records it very early in the Qur'an in Surat al-Baqarah. The Jinn existed at that time because they were before us, but we did not even exist at that time. Allah said to the angels:

٣٠ ... إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ... الْبَقْرَةُ:

Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority (Khaleefah). (Surat al-Baqarah: 30)

The angels understood what was meant by this. They were quite clear on what was being said and their response was what? Are you going to place on it somebody who is going to cause mischief and shed blood, while we celebrate Your praises day and night? So the angels are thinking logically here that if You want to be praised and You want more things to praise You, we do that without cease. We continuously praise You, so why are You going to create this Khaleefah who is just going to cause mischief and shed blood?

The angels know us and they understood us well, because one generation did not pass before the mischief and the bloodshed started. The son of this Khaleefah began the shedding of blood and the mischief, so the angels knew exactly what we were going to do. They did not have knowledge of the unseen, they had just seen the Jinn before us and knew that if you give anything else the free will to do what it wants to do, this is what is going to happen. They understood the word Khaleefah meant You are going to make something even greater than the Jinn. Allah responded by saying what? He did not explain Himself and He did not say this is the reason or that is the reason. What did He say?

...إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ... ﴿٣٠﴾ الْبَقَرَةُ:

Indeed, I know that which you do not know. (Surat al-Baqarah: 30)

So then He created Aadam 'alayhis-salaam and taught him the names of everything, to show to the angels how great of a creation he is going to be. He told everybody to bow down and they all did except Iblees, we know how the story goes. Then He placed Aadam in the garden of al-Jannah to dwell and live. You have to understand how much Allah loved His Khaleefah when He created Jannah for him to dwell in. Jannah was supposed to be where Allah wanted us to dwell initially. He created his wife and told them do not eat from the tree, but they were both tricked by Shaytaan to eat from the tree and they both did eat from the tree together. Then Allah said to them, you have to get down from here. There was something that happened in all of that, that has some value to understanding this whole situation. We are trying to do the right thing, struggling and striving for Allah and trying to put this formula into place, but we are going to screw it up. I can guarantee every one of you is going to screw it up.

There is a conversation that took place between Allah and Aadam, and it is recorded in Tafseer Ibn Katheer under these verses. Many of you may not know that Ibn Katheer was not only a Mufassir, he was also a Muhadith and he quotes a conversation that happened between Aadam and Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. He said as Aadam was being exited from the garden down to this earth, he asked Allah a set of questions. The first thing he asked Allah was, my Lord did You not create me with Your own hands? Allah said yes. Did you not breathe life into me? He said yes. And when I sneezed, You said Yarhamuk Allah? He said yes. Then a

very inquisitive question – He said when you placed me in the garden and told me not to eat from that tree, did You not already know I was going to eat from that tree? You see he knew the knowledge of Allah is absolute. Allah said, yes I knew you were going to eat from the tree. Allah knew Aadam was going to eat from the tree before He created anything. So Aadam said, then can You not forgive me for that which You already knew and put me back in that garden? Allah said yes and that is when He taught him how to get back. If you want to get back to that garden and you want to make it back here, say these words when you mess up like you just did. My Lord, I have wronged my own soul and if You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, then I will surely be one of the losers.

You see Allah taught us through Aadam the process by which we deal with sins and mistakes, and that is a personal relationship between us and Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. It is a very simple process – if you make a mistake, you fix it right away. It also shows that this is part of human nature. It is not that Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala is approving of your sin, He just knows you are going to do it. Every son of Aadam sins, and every one of us is most likely going to continue to sin for the rest of our lives until the day we die. There is nobody that is sinless and there is nobody who has been sinless, so we are going to make mistakes but we fix it.

يَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَيُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ

If Allah forgives you, you will be entered into Paradise. That is when we can say we made it. In this life there is no such thing as being successful, because it is only perceivable from certain people's standpoints. Success and failure will be determined on the day you stand before Allah. If He tells you to enter Jannah, you are successful. If He tells you to go to Hell, that is it. It does not matter what you had in this life – how much you did, how much you know or how much you earned – none of that will matter if it is not going to benefit you on the day you meet Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. That is reality. We strive for that and we ask Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala to forgive us and grant us al-Jannah.

The companions were so much better than us. We have to have all these faults and get encouraged and beg Allah for Jannah. Does anybody know the name of the first person to enter Jannah after the Prophets? Abu Bakr radhiyallahu 'anhu. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said after all the Prophets have entered into Jannah, Abu Bakr will approach. There are eight gates to Jannah and every person has their own gate based on what they did. There is a certain gate for certain people and everyone will know their gate. The Prophet 'alayhi-salaatu was-salaam said when Abu Bakr starts to approach Jannah, all eight gates open up and every angel who is in charge of that gate is begging Abu Bakr to come to their gate, so Abu Bakr gets to choose which angel he is going to honour by going through their gate. This is what we have to understand and we have to keep our connection to these types of individuals. Abu Bakr was not a Prophet and he did not receive Wahi – he was a human being

just like you and I, but through his Imaan he achieved something phenomenal that is almost not able to be understood. We beg for Jannah, and Jannah is begging for Abu Bakr.

Allah says:

وَيُدْخِلُكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَسَاكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِي جَنَّاتٍ عَدْنٍ

And admit you into Gardens under which rivers flow, and pleasant dwelling in Gardens of 'Adn – Eternity [Paradise].

Not only will Allah enter you into Jannah, and that would be enough trust me. Put your two feet into Jannah and you will not care about anything else. You would not care if you lived on the streets, I would not care if I did not have a home. If you entered into Jannah, you would not care as long as you get in there. You will not be asking anybody else how did you get here? We are here and we made it so that is it. But Allah said not only will He enter you into Jannah underneath which rivers flow, He will give you beautiful homes in the garden of 'Adn (which is like prime real estate in Jannah). In the UK, you have some prime real estate and it can cost a whole lot of money. Allah is telling you He will give you beautiful homes in prime real estate in Jannah.

ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

That is indeed the great success.

This is the great achievement. This is when you can look back and say I made it – I achieved something in my life. Just because you have two PHDs hanging on your wall, do not think you are successful and you have achieved something because if you go to Jahannam, you have failed and you are a loser. If the person who cleaned the sewers went to Jannah, he is better than you. None of that makes any difference. If what you have and what you have done is not going to be something that will take you to Jannah, you have failed and that is reality because Allah says:

ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

This is the greatest achievement – to enter into the doors of Jannah. No matter how you got there and no matter what you had in this life, if you have made it through those gates then you have succeeded.

Allah is going to give us everything we want in the Aakhirah for these three things, but Allah also understands that we are human beings who have never seen Aakhirah, so sometimes it is hard for us to grasp that idea of Aakhirah. It takes a lot to grasp the idea of a life that you

have never seen because we only know this life, so within this formula Allah gives us something connecting this to that.

وَأُخْرَى تُحِبُّونَهَا ۖ نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ ۖ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿الصف:

١٣

And also (He will give you) another (blessing) which you love, help from Allah (against your enemies) and a near victory. And give glad tidings (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to the believers. (Surat as-Saff: 13)

I will give you something else that you love and are begging Me for. We beg Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala for this during Jumu'ah, during Ramadhaan and so on. What does Allah say He will give us?

نَصْرٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ

Help from Allah (against your enemies).

Allah said I will send you help. I will help you – it is a promise. Does Allah break His promises?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ﴿آل عمران: ٩﴾

Verily, Allah never breaks His Promise. (Surat Aali Imraan: 49)

Allah does not break His promises for anyone and He is not going to start with you. Allah says He will give you help and then He says:

وَفَتْحٌ قَرِيبٌ

And a near victory.

I will make you clearly victorious. He did not just say Fath, but He will send it so it is Qareeb – so that it is clear to everyone that your success and the reason why you have succeeded in Dunya is because of Deen and because of Imaan. This was what was given to the companions. They were given victories and everyone around them knew that it was because Allah helped them. Even if they did not want to admit it, they knew it and they could see it. This is clear victory – this is a victory where you cannot claim that I earned it, I worked for it and I strove for it. No, I am victorious because Allah jalla wa a'laa has made me victorious and it is clear. So Allah is telling you He will not only give you Jannah in the Aakhirah, prime real estate and

whatever you want, but also in this life He will help you and make you victorious, so I do not know what we are asking Allah for because Allah has already given it to us fourteen hundred years ago.

وَبَشِّرْ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And give glad tidings (O Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) to the believers.

Allah is telling us to spread this news. Go tell the believers and give them glad tidings that if you believe and you strive for the cause of Allah, then you will be victorious in this life and in the next. How silly do we look as Muslims asking Allah for something He has already given us? We are asking Him for something, but we are not willing to do what He has asked us to do to get it. This is a big problem, because the only reason it is not coming to us is us. Allah jalla wa a'laa has already deposited that into an account because it is in the Qur'an. Allah has already said that you can have that, take it but you just have to do this. If you do this, it comes. This Ummah is suffering from its own destitution and its own unwillingness to make effort that is sincerely for the sake of Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala alone. This is something we need to fix, especially with the next generation.

I understand it is important for them to get a degree and get a good job and so on and so forth, but it is more important for them to understand how to put in work for Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala, and how to punch the clock for Allah jalla wa a'laa. Trust me those degrees are not as great as they used to be or what they think they are. The most successful people in the world have got no degrees and the majority of billionaires in the world are drop outs. There is something to be said for that. They put in work and it was work that got them where they are, not the piece of paper. It is about teaching our children good work ethics – how to put in work from a very early age. Then later on you have to teach them that the same way I taught you to be a hard worker, this is the way I want you to be for Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. When He tells you to do something, you put the same effort behind it as the way I told you to do it.

I am going to give you a small snippet of information right here. I did psychology as my secular studies so I have dabbled in child psychology as well, and this is something that I picked up. We always get mad at why our children do not have good Deen, they do not respect Allah and they do not fear Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. A lot of it comes from the fact that we did not teach them to have those things towards us. We allowed them to get away with a lot and when you are being nice to your children and you are spoiling them, it is actually ruining them in reality. Innately, children are going to have endearing love for you, and there is very little you can do that is going to take that away and cause them not to love you. Trust me. There is very little you can do to make them stop loving you, and not giving them what they want is not going to make them stop loving you. There is one thing that you have to teach them and

that is how to have a healthy respect and fear for you. That is something that has to be instilled into your children.

My three children and even my smallest at sixteen months knows that when I get a little bit loud, it is time to stop whatever I was just doing and go somewhere else because something was not right about that. My two boys know that I love them to death and I will spoil them to death, but when they step out of line and they see me get a little bit upset, they know what time it is. Their mum says the first thing they do when they do something wrong is, "Do not tell Dad please." They beg her not to tell me and I am not someone who abuses my children. I love my children to death, but they have a healthy respect and a healthy fear from me.

When they get old enough and my oldest is, I try to teach him that the same way you respect me and the same way you fear me when you commit a wrong and you do something you know you are not supposed to do – that is the way you are supposed to have love, respect and fear for Allah and it should be even more. Even more because even if I do not see you doing it, He sees you doing it and I cannot punish you the way He is going to punish you. So you see this is transferable and kids get that – it kind of clicks in. So we have to learn to attach ourselves to our children and teach them the way we would want them to have a relationship with Allah, they should have that relationship with us. This is how they learn. It is not just going to appear in their brain one day that they are supposed to have love, respect and fear for Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala. It is something you have to instill in them from a very early age.